

# EXHIBIT

“26”

November 27, 2019

Honorable Judge Gorton  
United States District Court  
District of Massachusetts  
1 Courthouse Way,  
Boston, Massachusetts, 02210

Dear Judge Gorton,

Michelle and I have been the closest of friends since we were nine years old and attended school together from the fourth grade through our high school senior year. Having had a less stable family life of my own, I grew up taking regular refuge at her house with her, her parents, older brother and then baby sister. It was definitely a full and busy house - and even if Michelle and I had to squeeze into her bedroom, I felt that there was always room for me.

Having a good amount of vacation time as university English teacher, I've been able to keep the tradition alive by visiting Michelle often. I may not have to share her twin bed anymore, but the feeling of "home" remains. Over the years, every visit with Michelle and her own family included setting time aside to see her parents and siblings, whom I love and respect deeply. I've never known a more tightly knit, supportive and loving family than the Merages and the Janavs.

After 40 years of friendship, I can say that Michelle is loving, funny, generous, altruistic, sensitive and responsible. Behind every one of these adjectives, is a lifetime of stories. Michelle is happy when the people around her are happy. Her charm is also her non-pretentious, open and somewhat gullible nature - not in an unsophisticated way but in a naive and overly-trusting way. In an environment like Los Angeles where kids were jaded before puberty, Michelle's innocence stood out. Our naughtiest moment together was feeding her baby sister cereal and cold milk instead of a properly cooked meal while babysitting. I remember her being shocked one morning when my father's girlfriend had spent the night - even though my parents had been divorced for years!

In high school as we were choosing colleges that fit our hopes for a future career, I remember Michelle clearly telling me that all she wanted was to become a mom. I remember the moment well because her "admission" left me speechless - growing up in the San Fernando Valley in the 80s was certainly not the ideal condition to foster such rare and unglamorous ambitions. And that sums it up: her life focus - even before having children - has always been to create a loving family and be there for her children.

Later in life she had the means to hire help to follow her kids' activities, but she insisted on being a full-time mom to her three beautiful children and dedicated partner to Paul, her husband of twenty years - never putting her needs before theirs. She's been the rock of the family in difficult times - always actively putting her family's welfare first.

As adults, our visits have always centered around family time and her unabashed commitment as a mother: Spanish homework, doctor visits, family dinners at the table, school pick-ups and more recently driving practice. All so familiar - just like when we were girls growing up: studying (and giggling) upstairs in her room, watching T.V. as a family, being dropped off at the mall or picked up after a school match, the rare thrill of a live concert, the drama of a crush. The simple familiarity of daily life with a loving family raising their kids.

Hearing that Michelle was involved in something like this is shockingly out of character. So shocking that I want to write that twice! Michelle has always shown the utmost respect for her parents and identified strongly with the values instilled in her by her family. Her father is the absolute epitome of the American work ethic, a living example of the importance of hard work to build moral character and succeed. Her mother embodies a gentle strength that teaches you to be fearless in the face of adversity. Her husband, Paul, also grew up with similar principles-- important attributes that were instantly attractive to her.

Realizing the gravity of her actions and that the price that her family is paying is far too great, I know she humbly puts herself at the mercy of the Court. To say she is remorseful can't even scratch the surface of the regret she feels. Her most precious three children have already paid heavily for her mistake - a mistake with real and devastating consequences for them, for their material and emotional future selves.

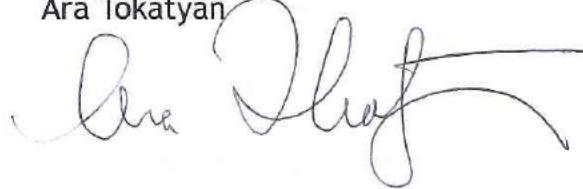
Michelle's family needs her. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Her children are at tremendously transformative ages as they have important new life experiences that are forging their characters -- as they move away from home, they need their mother more than ever.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Ara Tokatyan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ara Tokatyan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "A" at the beginning.